Guide to

Web Sites

for

Government Officials

July 2003

Illinois Commission on
Intergovernmental
Cooperation

Guide to

Web Sites
for
Government Officials

July 2003

Research Memorandum No.119

Joint Committee on Legislative Support Services

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PREFACE / USER'S GUIDE

The internet is a far-reaching source of information for all users, including government officials, and the range of information grows exponentially every year. Materials that once were available only through exhaustive research can now be accessed with the click of a mouse button and printed from the desktop. This document was developed to assist government officials and others, who frequently work under time constraints, in finding the material they need as expeditiously as possible.

This handbook is designed to summarize a pre-selected sample of the resources available on the Internet. Each selection has been reviewed with a critical eye toward its usefulness to government officials and workers. These sites provide access to useful data, downloadable reports, grant information, or access to tools that make finding government information easier. This document is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to all Internet resources related to government because the rapidly expanding nature of the Internet would make such a goal virtually impossible.

This guide includes general purpose, multi-topic Web sites that will provide useful information for government officials and workers at all levels. No attempt was made to include sites that deal with specific issues. Instead, information is provided on numerous search engines that can be used to search for specific information by keyword. (The names and addresses of many of the search engines are included in Appendix C). The search engines fill a gap by allowing the reader to search out whatever topics interest them.

The check-mark icons included with each review is designed to give the reader a glimpse of the features offered by the site, such as downloadable reports; links to other similar or useful Web sites; whether the site is searchable internally; and whether the site allows email contact with the organization providing the information. The graphic tool is not intended to reveal the complete content of the site, but rather to give a quick look at what types of information a user might find inside.

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If, in your travels through cyberspace, you find a site that proves especially useful please let us know. Submit your selections for consideration in subsequent versions of this guide via e-mail to:
kevinj@legis.state.il.us

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Office of the Governor
http://www.illinois.gov/

The Governor's homepage contains a variety of information regarding news, travel, business and government in the State of Illinois. The site also provides updates on the governor's current proposals and announcements. The links section contains links to all state agencies and various governmental sites such at "Firstgov" and the "Illinois Federal Clearinghouse". This is an excellent place to start any internet exploration of state government agencies because of the comprehensive listing of agency links and extensive information on the activities in the governor's office.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Office of the Lt. Governor
http://www.state.il.us/ltgov/

The Lt. Governor's site is a detailed offering that includes background on the office, information on the current office-holder and staff listings. The site also provides links to programs offered through the Lt. Governor's office. One of these programs is the State of Illinois Digital Signature/Public Key Infrastructure (PKI), which provides digital ID's to citizens as an accurate means of verifying and authenticating their identity over the Internet. Digital IDs simplify access to applications requiring signatures which previously could only be done in person. This project also opens the door to applications that cross the current boundaries between local, state, and federal government.

- ✓ Downloadable
  - E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Office of the Attorney General

http://www.ag.state.il.us/

The Attorney General's homepage contains clear graphics that make it easy to find well-defined categories of available information. The site includes a great deal of material about the Attorney General's programs and services including:

- Press releases from the AG's office:
- The AG's legislative Agenda for the 2003 General Assembly;
- An index of official opinions issued since 1995 to Present (last updated January 24, 2003);
- Information on consumer issues ranging from agricultural and environmental concerns to warnings about home repair schemes;
- Information on children's issues such as community-based programs for the promotion and preservation of children's health and safety; and
- a link dedicated to tobacco issues in the state of Illinois. This link contains downloadable documents concerning the tobacco settlement along with related links.

The publication section provides a variety of resources useful to government officials including:

- *Guide to Illinois Open Meetings Act*
- *The Illinois Franchise Disclosure Act and Rules - Know Your Rights and Responsibilities*

The website offers a wide range of resources for individuals struggling with legal issues including, those with disabilities, and senior citizens. It is a valuable resource for researchers on legal topics or for Illinois citizens investigating services offered by the Attorney General's office.

- ✓ Downloadable
  E-mail
- ✓ Links
  Searchable

Office of the Secretary of State
http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/

"Cyberdrive Illinois" contains a variety of information offered by the Secretary of State's office, including motorist services and library programs. One of the more notable features is a database that allows individuals to locate the nearest Secretary of State Drivers facility. The site also offers online address changes, license plate renewal and driver's license renewal for safe drivers. It also provides information on grants for libraries and library services. In short, a variety of excellent features for those with busy schedules.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Office of the State Treasurer
http://www.state.il.us/treas/

The Illinois Treasurer's home page has extensive information on state and local finances, as well as information on personal finances ranging from protecting one's personal credit to starting over after a divorce. There is also information on the treasurer's role as the state's chief investment banker which includes putting state funds to work in order to maximize the returns. The page is divided into the following areas:

- Inside the Office-describes the divisions and duties of the Treasurer's office;
- Personal Finance-money management tips for citizens;

- The Illinois Funds-gives details of the state's investment portfolio and information on opportunities for public money managers to share in the investment pool;
- Education-contains a financial glossary, a description of the Bank at School program, an adult education program and includes finance-related links;
- News and Publications-offers recent press releases and publications such as the Illinois Public Investor and the Treasurer's annual report;
- Programs and services-descriptions of programs operated by the Treasurer's office including agricultural programs, Ready Access programs for the disabled, the State Treasurer's Economic Program (STEP), Access to the Capitol, the Treasurer's Investment Policy, the Disaster Recovery Program, and the Treasurer's Targeted Initiative program which provides Illinois community service organizations with access to affordable capital to enhance and expand their services that benefit the public;
- Unclaimed Property- provides a link for citizens to locate unclaimed property for themselves or their family members without a fee;
- Forms-provides online forms for financial institutions doing business with the Illinois Treasurer's Office; and
- Bright Start College Program- a qualified tuition program under Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code enables individuals to build college savings. Earnings on account assets and qualified withdrawals are free from federal income taxes.

The Treasurer's office home page delivers a great deal of information in a largely straight forward manner. Although there is a certain amount of extraneous information on some links. There are good descriptions of current programs and online access to publications and forms.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Links
  Searchable

Office of the Comptroller
http://www.ioc.state.il.us

The Comptroller's home page makes good use of technology to deliver information and services to online researchers. This site makes available valuable fiscal reports to download in .pdf format. The reports offer the most current information on state fiscal matters, including; Fiscal Reports, Comptroller's Quarterly Reports, Accounting Bullentins and Fiscal Focus Magazine. The site also offers information on the Cemetary Trust Fund administered by the Comptroller's Office as well as descriptions and updates of other programs operated by that office.

The local government section that contains many useful resources including:

- Comptroller Connect- a three-tiered program designed to increase local government access to training, technology and materials that will help them improve the accuracy of annual financial reporting;
- Education and Training Information for Local government officials-provides dates and descriptions of seminars provided by the Comptroller's office along with electronic registration;
- Statutory Guidelines for local governments-contains statutes that affect local governments and the Comptroller;
- Assistance in filing annual reports electronically;
- Download Center-downloadable local government database that offers revenue and expenditure reports for local governments; and
- A tracking system to find local government officials and instructions and guidelines on how to report township funds.

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- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Illinois General Assembly
www.legis.state.il.us

There is no better place to observe the inner workings of state government than the Illinois General Assembly homepage. The site offers the ability to view and track legislation as it travels the labyrinthine path from introduction to final passage.

The site is divided into easy to understand sections, most of them menu-driven to provide easy access to the information within. The general sections are:

- Legislation & Laws
- Senate
- House
- Reports and Inquiries
- Rules and Regulations
- Additional Resources

The legislation & laws section allows users to access bills, resolutions, public acts, the Illinois compiled statutes, and the Illinois Constitution. Legislation from this general assembly contains sponsor information, bill status, and the complete bill text in a printer friendly format.

The Senate and House sections contain links to members, session schedules, committee schedules, journals for each chamber, transcripts (when available) the organization rules of each chamber, and audio links broadcasting live session audio over the internet. The House also broadcasts live session video as well, via Microsoft Windows Media Player. The members section contains a photograph and brief biography of

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each member, the bills they are currently sponsoring, their committee assignments, and contact information.

The Reports and Inquiries section contains reports, compiled by the Legislative Information Service(LIS), that allow users to organize bills by status, date, or by other relevant detail. The "My Legislation" section is a tracking service that allows users to create an account with LIS wherein you can enter bills into a tracking system that updates the bill information as it progresses through the lawmaking process. The tracking system allows you to design queries to sort the bill information you store on the system.

The Rules and Regulations section contains the Illinois Administrative Code, and the Illinois Register. The Administrative code is the rulebook by which agencies enforce Illinois statutes and the Register is the publication where those rules are publicly announced.

The additional resources section contains links to legislation from previous General Assemblies, Legislative Support Agencies, The State Board of Elections legislator lookup tool, and a capitol complex phonelist.

Additionally the legislation database is fully searchable by bill number or keyword.

LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT AGENCIES

Illinois Economic & Fiscal Commission

http://www.legis.state.il.us/commission/ecfisc /ecfisc_home.html

The Illinois Economic and Fiscal Commission, a bipartisan, joint legislative commission that provides the Illinois General Assembly with information relevant to the Illinois economy, taxes and other sources of revenue and debt obligations of the State. The Commission Web site provides access to their two primary reports:

- *Revenue Estimate and Economic Outlook*-which describes and projects economic conditions and their impact on State revenues; and
- *The Illinois Bond Watcher*-which examines the State's debt position as well as other issues directly related to conditions in the financial markets.

In addition, the site contains the latest Commission reports on various economic issues published throughout the year, monthly revenue briefings, and other past reports.

Joint Committee on Administrative Rules

http://www.legis.state.il.us/commission/jcar/default. htm

The Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) is a bipartisan legislative oversight committee which conducts systematic reviews of administrative rules promulgated by state agencies.

JCAR's Web site contains their weekly publication and the several state databases they maintain, including:

- *Flinn Report*-a weekly report intended to inform and educate Illinois citizens about current rulemaking;
- *Illinois Administrative Code*-a complete listing of Administrative Code; and
- *Illinois Register*-archived issues of the Illinois Register which publishes current rules of governmental agencies.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Commission

http://www.legis.state.il.us/commission/igcc/igcc_home.html

The Illinois Intergovernmental Cooperation Commission is a bipartisan legislative support service agency. The Commission assists members of the General Assembly in the area of federal/state/local governmental relations, and advances the cooperation between Illinois and other units of government. In 1977, the commission's statutory authority was expanded to include providing information on the state's federal grant information applications, awards, receipts and expenditures.

The Commission Web site features access to their publications such as:

- *Grant Alerts*—a weekly update of grants available from the federal government, complete with deadlines and federal contacts;
- *Intergovernmental Issues*—the Commission's quarterly newsletter with articles on a variety of intergovernmental topics;
- *Intergovernmental Updates*—a weekly update on current issues, published when the General Assembly is in session;
- *Catalog of State Assistance to Local Governments*—a biennial compilation of state technical and financial programs available to local governments.
- *Federal Funds to State Agencies*-annual report

Legislative Audit Commission

*http://www.legis.state.il.us/commission/lac
/lac_home. html*

The Legislative Audit Commission is responsible for the oversight of the State Audit Program. The site contains a list of the Commission's obligations and duties.

Legislative Information System

*http://www.legis.state.il.us/commission/lis/lis_home
.html*

The Legislative Information System is the legislative support service agency responsible for the operation of the legislative data center and associated equipment and software. Among the applications supported by this facility are the bill status, bill drafting, and Illinois Compiled Statutes data base.

Legislative Printing Unit

*http://www.legis.state.il.us/commission/lpu_home
.html*

The Legislative Printing Unit was established as a Legislative support service that provides printing services to members of the General Assembly and legislative agencies. The site contains general information about the printing unit.

Legislative Reference Bureau

http://www.legis.state.il.us/commission/lrb_home. html

The Legislative Reference Bureau carries out a wide range of functions relating to the legal and technical operation of the General Assembly. The primary task of the Bureau is the drafting and preparation of legislation. The site contains links to:

- The U.S. Constitution;
- The Illinois Constitution;
- A guide to drafting legislative documents;
- The organization of the Compiled Statutes; and
- Cross-referenced Compiled and Revised Statutes.

Legislative Research Unit

http://www.legis.state.il.us/commission/lru/lru_ home. html

The Legislative Research Unit is the chief general research agency for the Illinois General Assembly.

The LRU does research only for the General Assembly, but some publications are available to the public. Descriptions of these publications can be accessed on-line:

- *First Reading*, a legislative newsletter;
- *Directory of State Officials*, a telephone directory;
- *Constituent Services Guide*;
- *Tax Handbook for Legislators*;
- *County Data Book*;
- *1970 Illinois Constitution Annotated for Legislators*;
- Two pamphlets, "*Law for Youth*" and "*Laws for Older Adults*"; and
- Two charts, "How *a Bill Becomes Law in Illinois*," (English and Spanish) and "*Penalties for Crime in Illinois*."

Legislative Space Needs Commission
http://www.legis.state.il.us/commission/spcnds_home. html

The Legislative Space Needs Commission provides facilities and meets space needs for the Illinois General Assembly and its supporting commissions and bureaus. The site contains general information about the Commission.

Pension Laws Commission
http://www.legis.state.il.us/commission/penlaw/penlaw_home.html

The Pension Laws Commission performs a continuing study of the laws and practices relating to public pensions, retirement and disability benefits for persons in state or local government service and their survivors and dependents. The website contains general information about the Commission.

ILLINOIS STATE AGENCIES

Department on Aging
http://www.state.il.us/aging/

The mission of the Department on Aging is to serve as and advocate for older Illinoisans and their caregivers by administering programs and promoting partnerships that encourage independence, dignity, and quality of life. Thus, the website offers an overview on the various programs that the Agency offers. The highlights include the following:

- Care Giver Support Program- program developed in conjunction with area agencies on aging and local community-service providers to develop basic services for family caregivers;
- Assistance in Your Home and Community- provides information on programs and services that help senior citizens to remain living independently in their own homes;
- Elder Abuse Prevention-offers information on legal services, elder rights and protecting seniors in nursing homes and long-term care centers;
- News and publication- updated press releases and publications regarding the department and its programs as well as a "Senior Ask" advice column; and
- Intergenerational and Volunteer Programs- provides information to grandparents raising their grandchildren.

This site includes the Pharmaceutical Assistance in Illinois links. It provides information on the Circuit Breaker program and Illinois Senior Care. Overall this site is full of useful information for seniors and their families.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Searchable
- ✓ Links

Department of Agriculture

http://www.agr.state.il.us/

The Illinois Department of Agriculture's well-organized site is designed to promote agriculture programs in Illinois. The homepage offers links to county fairs, market reports and soil temperature reports. The side bar contains information regarding the IDOA and useful information for farmers including:

- About the Department-general ag information, annual reports, boards and commissions and agricultural organizations;
- Marketing and Promotions-food guide, Illinois agribusiness guide, hay directory, Illinois products logo, international marketing, domestic marketing, and scheduled events;
- Animal Health and Welfare-information on animal health programs, welfare laws, laboratory services, meat and animal poultry, exhibition requirements, Illinois achievements in animal health and information regarding Chronic Wasting Disease;
- Inspection and Regulation-information on the testing of weights and measures, food safety, meat and poultry, animal health, agricultural products inspection, grain warehouses, bees and apiaries, and pesticide use;
- Downloadable forms and applications- forms for various ag programs including the following; Agricultural Cooperatives, Agri-First, Agricultural Products Inspection, Animal Welfare, Grain Warehouse/Dealers, and Livestock Management Facilities Forms, among others;
- Programs and services-detailed information on agricultural business programs that benefit consumers, farmers and agribusinesses; and
- Environmental issues-programs of the Environmental Division with an effort to control plant pests and disease, including noxious weed control. Other programs include; the Livestock Management Facilities Act, Conservation 2000,

> and the Agrichemical Facility Containment
> Program.

The IDOA site also offers links to horse racing programs in Illinois, press releases and a Kid's Page.   For those who like fresh produce and want to support the Illinois farming community, there is an Illinois Farmer's market search.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Department of Central Management Services
http://www.state.il.us/cms

The Central Management home page provides useful information to state employees, other governments and the public. It includes sections on the following:

- Services to the Public;
- Services to Government;
- Education and Employment;
- Purchasing/Selling to the State;
- Employee Programs;
- Communications and Technology; and
- Human Resources.

The property management section contains information on CMS surplus property procedures including state and federal surplus property and I-CYCLE (recycling) programs.

The local government section contains information on the following CMS services:

- Joint purchasing program-allows local governments to purchase equipment and supplies at state government discount rates;
- A self-insured local government employee health plan;
- Vehicle service program-provides local governments access to discounted automotive repair services; and
- Surplus property distribution-makes a wide range of state and federal surplus property available to local governments and others.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
  Searchable

Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
http://www.commerce.state.il.us

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) is a well-organized site that offers a variety of services to local governments and small business owners. This site provides the latest press releases regarding commerce and economic opportunity as well as a calendar of upcoming events and spotlights on relevant programs and events involving the governor and fiscal reports.

The site also provides information about the various Bureaus of the DCEO and their programs. These bureaus include:

- Business Development;
- Small Business;
- Coal;
- Community Development;
- Energy and Recycling;
- The Illinois Film Office;
- The Illinois Trade Office;
- Technical and Industrial Competitiveness; and
- Tourism.

The website also offers an assortment of tools that provide excellent information for those interested in the following issues:

- Business Incentives-provides information DCEO programs and also offers a resource center;
- Illinois fact sheets-information on a range of topics such as schools, coal, telecommunications and manufacturing;
- Business support-provides a business center as well as resources for those interested in starting their own business;
- Community Building-provides a directory to the many web pages of Illinois' communities;
- Information on the Director's office-provides the helpful website **illinoisbiz.biz**, which is full of news and information about DCEO's programs, as well as local and regional developments of interest;
- Explore Illinois-offers facts and opportunities in Illinois. It is a useful tool for those interested in moving to Illinois;
- Flip Maps- provides road maps of Illinois and well as driving directions;
- Grants, Loans, and RFPS-provides information on obtaining grants and loans in Illinois; and
- Illinois First-lists details of the Illinois First Program along with press releases and information on projects listed by region or county.

Overall the DCEO website offers a great deal of information and may be useful to business owners as well as the citizens of Illinois.

- ✓ Downloaedable
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

http://www.icjia.org

Part of the mission of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) is to share information about criminal justice with law enforcement agencies across the state. The ICJIA Web page assists in fulfilling that mission. The section entitled "About the ICJIA" provides an excellent overview of the Authority's programs, services and structures including the following sections:

- ICJIA divisions and units;
- Description of the ICJIA databases and software, developed for local governments; and
- Information about grant opportunities and requests for proposals.

The site also offers a well-organized page for the Gun Crime Resource Project and an evaluation of the Sex Offendor Probation Program. The page is available in four different languages.

Illinois State Board of Education

www.isbe.state.il.us

The State Board of Education homepage strikes a balance between promoting agency programs and providing information for researchers and administrators. The default page opens with agency news and upcoming events, both of which are updated on a regular basis. The navigation band on the left side of the page contains links to information about the agency and its programs. Highlights of the site include pages highlighting:

- Student/Parents page
- Teachers Resources
- Administrators Resources
- School Finance

- Grants
- No Child Left Behind
- Legislation
- Rules and Waivers
- Employment

The dedicated pages for students, teachers, and administrators provide in-depth information on variety of topics sorted by interest area. The school finance page allows for online report submission, a collection of finance related databases, and downloadable budgeting tools. The grants page allows for searching/browsing a number of grant databases including both state and federal funding opportunities. The employment page has links to job listings within the agency as well as the Illinois Education Job Bank and the National Teacher Recruitment Clearinghouse. The ISBE website features a clean, uncluttered design that allows users to easily find the information they need with a minimum amount of efforts, not flashy, but effective.

Illinois State Board of Elections

www.elections.state.il.us

The State Board of Elections is a well-organized, informative site. In addition to information about the board and its mission, the site contains the following useful sections:

- Voting Information- contains information on how to vote, how to register to vote in Illinois, and downloadable forms to request computerized voter data;
- Election Information- provides searchable candidate filing information, current election totals, and downloadable documents;
- Campaign Disclosure-gives information about campaign finance in an accessible, easily searched format;
- Vote totals- provides the latest statewide and district race information; and

- Election forms-disclosure forms online filing software.

The vote totals page allows the user to select a number of statewide and legislative races and find the vote totals by candidate or race. The access to disclosure forms, petition deadlines, and election operation documents makes this site valuable to government officials and candidates.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Emergency Management Agency
www.state.il.us/iema

The Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) is charged with protecting the lives and property of citizens before a disaster strikes and reducing their distress in its aftermath. It does so through coordination of the state's response and recovery efforts utilizing partnerships with state, local, and federal agencies and voluntary organizations. The site offers these valuable links:

- Illinois School Emergency Planning Guide;
- County and Municipal Guidelines for the implementation for the State of Illinois Homeland Security Advisory Commission;
- Public Assistance Grants; and
- Community Guidelines for Developing a Spontaneous Volunteer plan;
- Public Assistance Program-Disaster Relief Grant applications available to download.

This is an informative site for the public assistance section provides downloadable applications and forms.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ Searchable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links

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Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
http://www.epa.state.il.us/

The IEPA provides information on the various bureaus of the EPA. These include the water, air and land. Links to these bureaus provide an overview of the work as well as forms, publications, programs, reports and current news. Some of the highlights of the site include:

- Offices and Special Projects-offers information on community relations, pollution prevention, small businesses, laboratory accreditation, ISO 14001s, regulatory innovation and strategic planning;
- Hot Topics-provides recent public notices, and press releases regarding EPA regulation and news;
- Rules and Regulations-Illinois Environmental Regulations (at the Illinois Pollution Control Board), Illinois Environmental Statutes and Legislation (at the Illinois Pollution Control Board), Federal Environmental Regulations (at the U.S. EPA), other rules include, Environmental Laboratory Certification Fee Rules, Site Remediation Program, and the Freedom of Information Act;
- Forms-offers forms and publications such as Environmental Progress, Green Talk, Environmental Conditions Report, Performance Partnership Agreement, and the Toxic Chemical Report;
- Vehicle Emissions- Testing-provides general information, compliance forms, seminars and workshops, locations of nearest emissions testing facilities;
- Green Illinois-an environmental program designed to encourage community environmental planning and make state government a model for environmental stewardship.

Overall, this site is easy to navigate and offers a lot of valuable information, not only for those interested in protecting the environment, but also for the general public. Small business owners, such as drycleaners and automotive repair shops, will find the information a useful source of environmental regulations.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Department of Human Rights
http://www.state.il.us/dhr

The Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) website features the following sections:

- How to file a charge-methods to protest discrimination in employment, housing, financial credit, sexual harassment, and public accomodations;
- Laws and regulations-text of the Illinois Human Rights Act and the regulations of implementing it;
- IDHR Programs-announcements of community forums, request for speakers and community conflict intervention, etc.. Also provides the name and address of a contact person; and
- Related links to organizations and information on human rights topics.

The IHDR home page is an excellent resource for information on human rights issues, well-organized and easily navigated. A excellent link on the site is to the Governor's Commission on Hate Crimes and Discrimination. The sections on mediation and public contact assistance are especially useful for local governments seeking assistance in complying with the Illinois Human Rights Act.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail

- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Department of Human Services

http://www.state.il.us/agency/dhs

The DHS site contains a wealth of information on services for low-income and disabled individuals including:

- Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (OASA);
- Division of Community Health and Prevention (CHP);
- Division of Community Operations (DCO); and
- Division of Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities Services (MHDD).

The site also contains other agency links and a guide to using them to find information. Links include, among others:

- Office Locator;
- Services;
- Organization;
- News & Publications;
- Rules & Policy;
- Careers at DHS; and
- HIPPA

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Department of Natural Resources

http://www.dnr.state.il.us/

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources homepage provides information on obtaining hunting, fishing, boating and snowmobile licenses, permits and registration. Other features include:

- About the DNR-provides addresses of the various DNR offices and the DNR's strategic plan for 2003-2008;
- Agency Offices-provides information about DNR administration, Capital Development, Director's Office, Lands & Education, Law Enforcement, Mines & Minerals, Public Services, Resource Conservation, Realty & Environmental Planning, and Water Resources; and
- Get Involved –provides links to Kids & Education, Park &Lodges, and Outdoor Illinois/Publications;

Department of Public Aid

www.state.il.us/dpa

The Illinois Department of Public Aid website is designed to promote its core programs and products. The homepage is relatively Spartan, showing only IDPA news, underneath a color graphic banner. Clicking on the icons within the banner, however, takes you to a wealth of information on each program, including program rules and applications.   Program links are available for the following programs:

- KidCare
- Illinois RX Seniorcare
- Child Support Enforcement
- Medical Assistance Programs
- The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

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There are also links to information about the IDPA itself, including the Office of the Inspector General which investigates Medicaid fraud in Illinois. The agency information provided include the agency's budget, staff directory, relevant laws and codes, press releases and information regarding doing business with the agency. Throughout the site there are links back to the core programs, leaving no doubt about the agency's priorities. Solid information and a streamlined layout make this a valuable resource for web researchers.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
  Searchable

The Department of Public Health
www.idph.state.il.us

The Illinois Department of Public Health homepage reflects the agencies commitment to providing accurate and timely information to the public. Front and center of the opening page is a column that highlights recent public health news events, focusing on current or emerging public health threats. The left side of the page contains links to the sites subsidiary pages including links to:

- About the departments
- A-Z Topic List
- News Releases
- Health Fact Sheets
- Online Publications
- Laws and Rules
- Birth/Death Records
- Health Statistics
- IDPH Calendar
- Links to Other Public Health Site

The health fact-sheets contain concise descriptions of over fifty diseases. The online publications provide information on how to respond to a variety of public health emergencies. Information regarding birth and

death certificates as well as marriage licenses are available online although there are is no direct access to the birth/death record databases. The health statistics page contains statistics, both current and historical, on a number of birth and mortality topics.

Frequent visitors to the IDPH site will appreciate how quickly IDPH staff update the site in response to emerging public health situations. The site contains information regarding several (currently) breaking health topics such as SARS, the West Nile Virus, and the recent Monkeypox virus outbreak. The site contains an up to date Beach Watch feature listing beach closures statewide along with the reason for their closure. The IDPH site continues to be a valuable resource for both historical and up-to-the-minute health information.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ Links
- ✓ E-mail
  Searchable

Department of Revenue
http://www.revenue.state.il.us

The Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) home page contains useful information on a number of topics, including:

- Statistical information-2001 annual report and current interest rates;
- Revenue publications-a variety of IDOR guides and bulletins such as the Tax Rate Reference Manual;
- Laws and Legislation;
- Electronic Services-electronic tax filing, electronic cash transfer guide, tax fax and telefile;
- Revenue mailboxes-email IDOR officials;
- Downloadable tax forms and schedules; and
- Taxpayer information-FAQ, Taxpayers Bill of Rights, seminars and conferences.

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Public officials might find the Sales Tax Reference Manual useful as well as the information contained in the Revenue Publications page including:

- Fed-State Tax Review- a newsletter for tax professionals;
- Front Good-newsletter for Illinois Assessing Officials;
- Income tax quarterly indexes;
- Property Tax Statistics (1999);
- Payments to Local Government; and
- Electronic Filing Guides (liquor, cigarette, and telecommunications)

The IDOR home page is a valuable tool for anyone seeking more information about taxation and revenue issues. While many of its features are designed for the average citizen, government officials will find it useful as well, making it a valuable addition to the state's internet offerings.

Office of the State Fire Marshal
http://www.state.il.us/osfm/

The office of the State Fire Marshal's homepage presents a mixture of promotional material and statistical information. The main menu contains information on topics such as fire facts, as well as a wide range of statistical data on fires, fire injuries and fire deaths. The agency will email fire-prevention suggestions on request.

Another feature provides fire safety tips including awareness and educational materials. As with all state agencies, the site offers the various agency divisions and their responsibilities.

The "divisions and responsibilities" menu offers the agency functions and includes personnel standards. The following information may be useful to government officials:

- Certification codes for firefighters;
- Exam sites and dates; and
- Special testing vs. regional testing explanation.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Illinois State Museum

http://www.museum.state.il.us

The State Museum is a well-organized, simple and easy to use site. The homepage offers the following categories:

- General Information-provides directories, gift shops, history, museum sites, and frequently asked questions;
- Current Events-current exhibits and programs at all Museum sites;
- Programs-Education, Research, Publications, Museum Grants, and the Illinois Artisans Program;
- Exhibits-on-line exhibits and physical exhibits;
- Collections-description of the extensive collections maintained by the museum;
- ISM Sites-links to various sites such as the Illinois Art Gallery and the Dickson Mounds Museum; and
- Membership-information on how to become a member of the Museum Society.

  Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
  Searchable

Illinois Supreme and Appelate Courts

http://www.state.il.us/court

The Illinois Court's website provides information on the Supreme, Appellate and Circuit Courts in Illinois. The site offers current and archived press releases, Supreme and Appellate Court Documents, and an overview of probation programs. The site also delivers Supreme Court and Appellate Court opinions.

Users who are looking for a specific opinion should have no problem finding it. Appellate Court decisions are arranged by appellate district and Supreme Court opinions are filed by date. Opinions may also be searched by entering the docket number, case number, party name, or any other case-specific information in the search box. The search option offers detailed instructions. There is no email option, however, there is an address and phone number for a contact person. General legal advice or answers to research questions will not be given.

- ✓ Downloadable
  E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Department of Transportation

http://dot.state.il.us

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) home page offers the following useful information:

- IDOT news-general- IDOT information, announcements, and press releases;
- Traveling-public-road conditions, other forms of public transportation in Illinois, maps and routes, construction projects, traffice safety information, and information for truckers;
- Doing Business with IDOT-contracting, sales, research, permits, forms, and bulletins;
- Public Partners-educational information, public hearing postings, economic development programs, and resources for local agencies; and
- Other resources-maps, tollway information, roadway weather information.

A bonus on of this site is the vehicle registration link that takes the user to the Secretary of States website. In addition, the site offers a wide range of programs and information, from items geared to trip-takers to those interested in seeking employment at IDOT.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

STATEWIDE ASSOCIATIONS

Community and Economic Development
University at Illinois Champaign Urbana
http://www.communitydevelopment.uiuc.edu/

Community and Economic Development is an outgrowth of the community development programs at the University of Illinois and the Cooperative Extension Service. The program is designed to support community and economic development efforts of local people, their governments and representatives. The site is an informative and useful resource for individuals and local officials hoping to expand the economic base in their community. The site offers the following sections:

- Community Assessments-includes links to the Community Development Toolbox, Community SWAP, information on how to conduct a survey in communities, Telecom Readiness Index, Evaluate Community Websites, and eGovernment Readiness index;
- Community Planning-provides information on the Rural Recreation Program, Strategic Planning Online, Scheduling Project Activities, and Planning for Internet Connectivity;
- Tourism-offers insight into assessing and developing tourism resources, a tourism capacity index, and a retention and expansion program for travel and tourism businesses;
- Local Government Programs-programs for local governments and a section assessing whether or not a community is ready for eGovernment; and
- Spanish Language Programs-links to the University of Illinois Extension Spanish speaking radio "Nuevos Horizontes".

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Illinois Municipal League

http://www.iml.org

The Illinois Municipal League (IML) home page provides a good way to keep up with the IMA and its activities. The major topic areas on this site include:

- Calendar-upcoming IML events;
- Illinois municipal codes-links to the municipal codes of several Illinois cities;
- Legal news and library-IML legal bulletins, IML case summaries, links to Illinois court decisions, State Gift Ban Act, as well as analyses and forms for current legal issues facing municipalities;
- Legislation-legislative bulletins, new laws affecting municipalities, current General Assembly listing, local official comments;
- Illinois Municipal calendar-important dates and deadlines;
- Municipal exchange service-job opportunities and items for sale;
- Publication-order forms for IML publications; and
- Illinois Web sites-links to home pages of Illinois cities and towns.

Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission

http://www.nipc.cog.il.us

The Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC's) is the official comprehensive planning agency for the six-county Chicago metropolitan area. NIPC's stated goal is to work with the citizens and governments of Northeastern Illinois to promote sound and orderly development in a sustainable equitable region.

The NIPC home page is loaded with useful data for civic and regional planners including:

- About NIPC-a description of NIPC and its goals;
- Toward 2020- a series of population, employment, and economic forecasts for the Chicago metropolitan area based on a number of possible scenarios and available by community and county;
- About the region-a statistical look at each of the counties in the region, including statistics on education, trade, births, labor and finances;
- Publications and services-NIPC publications;
- 2000 Census updates;
- Maps and data tables for counties and places;
- Conservation guidelines for local ordinances; and
- GIS Clearinghouse and catalog.

Township Officials of Illinois
http://www.toi.org

The Township Officials of Illinois (TOI) homepage is designed to promote the organization and the services they provide to their members. The TOI web page offers the following sections:

- About TOI-description of the Township Officials of Illinois and its activities;
- History of TOI-describes the history and functions of townships;
- Staff Contacts-email to TOI officials;
- Upcoming Events-offers dates significant for township officials;
- Township Officials Magazine-highlights from the most recent edition of TOI magazine; and
- Publications-downloadable order forms for TOI publications.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WEB SITES

FedWorld
http://www.fedworld.gov/

The FedWorld.gov web site is a gateway to government information. This site is managed by the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) and is part of its information management mandate. FedWorld serves as the online locator service for a comprehensive inventory of information disseminated by the Federal Government. Some of the services include:

- Find a Federal Government Job;
- Search for Federal Government Development and Publications; and
- Link to Supreme Court Decisions.

FedWorld is a good place to start a research project because it provides links to the top government agencies as well as "Firstgov".

The Federal Web Locator
http://www.infoctr.edu/fwl/

The Federal Web Locator is a service provided by the Center for Information Law and Policy and is intended to be the one stop shopping point for federal government information on the World Wide Web. The Web locator is an exhaustive collection of links to nearly every federal internet server. The links are organized roughly by branch of government, and in an outline format with the following major headings:

- Federal legislative branch;
- Federal judicial branch;
- Federal executive branch;
- Federal independent establishments and, government corporations;
- Federal consortium and quasi-official agencies;

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- Federal boards-commissions and committees; and
- Non-government federally-related sites.

The White House
http://whitehouse.gov

The Whitehouse.gov is the official Website of the President and Vice President. The site is both promotional and informational. It is updated regularly and usually contains announcements about presidential initiatives on a broad range of topics. A sampling of information available from the White House includes:

- Biographical information on the President, first lady, Vice President and his wife;
- In Focus-provides updates and information on the following topics: Medicare, Iraq, National Security, Homeland Security, Economic Security, other issues of interest and this can all be translated into Spanish;
- News-includes current news releases, press briefings, radio addresses, executive orders, videos, and proclamations;
- Appointments-provides nominations and applications;
- Major speeches-provides the President's speeches on important topics such as Iraq, State of the Union, UN Remarks, and Education; and
- Ask the White House-an online interactive forum where you can submit questions to White House officials or read previous discussions.

Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Thomas: Legislative Information on the Internet

http://thomas.loc.gov/

Thomas is the congressional legislative source on the Internet. Acting under the directive of the leadership of the 104th Congress to make federal legislative information freely available on the Internet, a Library of Congress team brought the THOMAS World Wide Web system online in January 1995. Thomas, named for President Thomas Jefferson provides access to current and past legislation including:

- Floor Activities;
- Legislation;
- Congressional Records;
- Days in Session Calendar;
- Historical documents; and
- Legislation related to the September 11, 2001 attack.

The Thomas homepage also contains links to congressional agencies and the Library of Congress, and is searchable by bill number or keyword. This homepage provides the most in-depth information available about the activities of Congress.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Division

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/index.html

The USDA Rural Development Division is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America. Their website offers technical assistance and information to help agriculture and other cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of

their member services. The site contains an introductory statement about the divisions' goals, purpose and general information. The site contains vast information for those interested in rural affairs. Overviews of some of the useful sections are:

- Programs-Business and Cooperative;
- Rural Housing Service;
- Rural Utilities Service;
- Community Development;

In addition the site offers a list of state offices located in the US along with the latest news and information, publications, and regulations. It also provides other USDA links and may be translated into Spanish.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Links
  Searchable

NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

National Association of Counties
http://www.naco.org/

The National Association of Counties (NACO) maintains a comprehensive database of information on counties, including a listing of county officials, and links to Capitolimpact.com, which provides nationwide county statistics such as economic and demographic data. In addition, NACO is developing a database of county policies, code, ordinances and model programs that can be used as examples for other counties. The most useful aspect of the site is the section marked legislative affairs. The legislative homepage contains a series of useful features including:

- Legislative Action Center-send a letter to your congressman;
- Fact sheets on key county issues;
- NACO legislative priorities;

- Legislative bulletin-recent issues of NACO's legislative bulletin;
- NACO lobbyists;
- Information on NACO steering committees; and
- American County Platform-NACO's position on key issues.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

National Association of Towns and Townships

http://www.natat.org/natat/

The purpose of the National Association of Towns and Townships (NATaT) is to strengthen the effectiveness of town and township government. NATaT does this by educating lawmakers and public policy officials about how small town governments operate and by advocating policies on their behalf in Washington, D.C. The NATAT site offers the following:

- Membership;
- Schedule-an agenda of the NATAT annual conference;
- Washington Report-newsletter on NATAT activities in Washington;
- Legislative Alerts-e-mail subscription programs to alert officials to legislative developments;
- Legislative Priorities
- Links to township related sites; and
- Addresses of state associations.

   Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

National Center for Small Communities

http://www.smallcommunities.org/ncsc/

The National Center for Small Communities is a national nonprofit organization devoted exclusively to serving the leaders of America's smaller communities. The NCSC is affiliated with the National Association of Towns and Townships and shares a web-server. The site offers the following topics:

- Membership-how to join NCSC
- National Conference-a description of the NCSC annual conference;
- Programs and Services- a description of NCSC services;
- Publications-a description of NCSC publications and order form;
- Rural development links-links to sites with similar focus; and
- American hometown leadership awards for local elected officials.

    Downloadable
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Links
    Searchable

National League of Cities

http://www.nlc.org/nlc_org/site/

The National League of Cities (NLC) is the oldest and largest national organization representing municipal governments throughout the United States. Its mission is to strengthen and promote cities as centers of opportunity, leadership, and governance. Working in partnership with 49 state municipal leagues, NLC serves as a national resource and an advocate for the more than 18,000 cities, villages, and towns it represents. The National League site has the following highlights:

- About NLC-information about the League and its services;
- Membership-communities and organizations belonging to the NLC;
- Advertisements for the NLC programs and services;
- NLC's legislative agenda; and
- Links to state municipal leagues.

The site also provides a calendar of upcoming events, publications, and news that effects local governments. Overall, the site is informative and easy to navigate.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

U.S. Conference of Mayors
http://usmayors.org

The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) is a nonpartisan organization representing cities with a population over 30,000. The mayor of each of these cities serves as the city representative to the conference. The USCM Web page has a wide range of information reflecting diverse issues facing cities. The information is a mix of promotional materials and useful data that takes a bit of sifting through to separate. The site contains the following headings:

- About the USCM;
- USCM projects and services;
- Best practice award winners-details award-winning solutions implemented by cities across the nation to solve a diverse range of municipal problems;
- Washington update-provides information about legislation affecting cities as it makes its way through Congress;
- Meet the mayors; and
- City source.

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- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

MISCELLANIOUS NATIONAL SITES

Donors Forum of Chicago

http://www.donorsforum.org/index.html

The Donors Forum of Chicago is an association of Chicago-area grantmakers. Its mission is to promote effective and responsive philanthropy. The forum has over 180 grantmaking members and is dedicated to bringing grantmakers and grantseekers together. The site has a variety of research materials and tools for nonprofits seeking assistance. Membership is required to access some features of the site, but access to the grantseekers toolbox and research section are free. The site contains information similar to that found on the Foundation Center site, only tailored for Chicago and Illinois.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

Municipal Code Corporation

http://www.municode.com

The Municipal Code Corporation is a private company whose primary business is the compiling, indexing, and publishing of municipal codes. Their Web site offers the municipal codes of certain cities that subscribe to their services, including 47 Illinois cities. Users can peruse the municipal code of the available cities using a limited set of search tools.

Two factors limit the usefulness of this site: the search tools cannot do global searches as searches are limited to one particular code, and the codes are paginated in small sections making it difficult to browse through a particular code. The Municipal Code Corporation offers a Sample Ordinance Service that contains a selection of sample ordinances believed to particularly well-drafted. This service is available only to subscribers and was not reviewed for this publication.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

The Foundation Center
http://fdncenter.org/

The Foundation Center Online contains wealth of information for those seeking information regarding grants from non-governmental organizations. The Foundation Center has a mixture of subscription services that provide for searches for specific grants for groups or individuals (not reviewed) and free databases and tutorials for grant seekers. Of specific interest is the database of foundations, including links to those with an Internet presence.

The site also contains a collection of grantseeker tools and sample applications. The online proposal writing course is a useful guide to writing grant applications. Also included is a thorough FAQ and collection of free electronic newsletters that grant seekers can subscribe to.

- ✓ Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

U.S. State & Local Gateway

www.firstgov.gov/Government/State_Local.shtml

U.S. State & Local Gateway is a collection of links pre-selected by topic and issue. The gateway was developed to provide state and local officials easy access to federal government information and related topics. The site only contains external links to other government related sites.

The links cover a diverse and useful range of subjects but are far from comprehensive. The site contains an alphabetical listing of agencies large and small, including some that even the most experienced web use may be unfamiliar with. This may serve as a useful starting part for those with a general topic in mind; however users seeking specific information quickly might be better served by a search engine.

- Downloadable
- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Searchable

S T A T E   G O V E R N M E N T
W E B   S I T E S

The following is a list of Web sites for Illinois government agencies. Each of these sites was reviewed in the preparation of this guide. The entries in bold are included in the main section of this guide. Space limitations precluded viewing all site.

Aging, Dept. on	www.state.il.us/aging
Agriculture, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/agr
Appellate Defender's Office	www.state.il.us/defender
Arts Council	www.state.il.us/agency/iac
Attorney General, Office of	www.ag.state.il.us
Auditor General	www.state.il.us/auditor
Banks and Real Estate, Office of	www.state.il.us/obr
Bureau of the Budget	www.state.il.us/budget
Central Management Services, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/cms
Children and Family Services, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/dcfs/index.shtml
Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Dept. of	www.commerce.state.il.us
Commerce Commission	www.state.il.us/icc/home.aspx
Community College Board	www.iccb.state.il.us
Comptroller, Office of the	www.comptroller.state.il.us
Corrections, Dept. of	www.idoc.state.il.us
Criminal Justice Information Authority	www.icja.org/public/index.cfm
Elections, State Board of	www.state.il.us/election
Emergency Management Agency	www.state.il.us/iema
Employment Security, Dept. of	il.jobsearch.com
Environmental Protection Agency	www.epa.state.il.us

Financial Institutions, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/dfi
Governor, Office of the	www.state.il.us/gov
Guardianship and Advocacy Commission	www.state.il.us/igac
Health Care Cost Containment Council	www.state.il.us/agency/hcccc/
Historic Preservation Agency	www.state.il.us/hpa
Housing Development Authority	www.ihda.org
Human Rights, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/dhr
Human Services, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/agency/dhs
Insurance, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/ins
Labor, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/agency/idol
Lieutenant Governor, Office of the	www.state.il.us/ltgov
Liquor Control Commission	www.state.il.us/lcc
Lottery, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/lottery
Military Affairs, Dept. of	www.il.ngb.army.mil/
Natural Resources, Dept. of	www.dnr.state.il.us
Nuclear Safety, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/idns
Occupational Information Coordinating Committee	www.ides.state.il.us
Pollution Control Board	www.ipcb.state.il.us
Professional Regulation, Dept. of	www.dpr.state.il.us
Public Aid, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/dpa
Public Health, Dept. of	www.idph.state.il.us
Revenue, Dept. of	www.revenue.state.il.us
Secretary of State	www.sos.state.il.us
State Board of Education	www.isbe.state.il.us
State Fire Marshal	www.state.il.us/osfm
State Museum	museum.state.il.us
State of Illinois Home Page **(Office of the Governor)**	www.illinois.gov
State Police, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/isp
State Retirement Systems	www.state.il.us/srs
State Treasurer	www.state.il.us/treas
State Universities Retirement System	www.surs.com

Student Assistance Commission	www.isac1.org
Supreme and Appellate Court	www.state.il.us/court
Teacher's Retirement System	www.trs.state.il.us
Transportation, Dept. of	www.dot.state.il.us
Veterans Affairs, Dept. of	www.state.il.us/agency/dva

F E D E R A L   W E B   S I T E S

The following is a selected list of federal government Web sites. The volume of federal Web locations precludes a comprehensive listing of all federal sites. The sites listed below include major agencies and divisions of the U.S. government. Sites included in this publication are listed in bold. Sites not included in this publication may contain useful information, but were judged not to have content directly related to local governments.

Agency	**URL**
Department of Agriculture	http://www.usda.gov
• Food and Nutrition Service	http://www.fns.usda. gov/fncs/
• **Rural Development**	http://www.rurdev.usda. gov
Department of Commerce	http://www.doc.gov
• **Bureau of the Census**	http://www.census.gov
• STAT-USA	http://www.stat-usa.gov/stat-usa.html
• **Economic Development Administration**	http://www.osec.doc.go v/eda/
• National Technical Information Service	http://www.fedworld. gov
Department of Education	http://www.ed.gov
• Office of Elementary and Secondary Education	http://www.ed.gov/ offices/oese
• Office of Postsecondary Education	http://www.ed.gov/ offices/ope
• Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services	http://www.ed.gov/ offices/ose
• Office of Vocational and Adult Education	http://www.ed.gov/ offices/ovae
Department of Energy	http://www.doe.gov

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Department of Health and Human Services	http://www.os.dhss.gov
• Administration for Children and Families	http://www.acf.dhhs.gov
• Administration on Aging	http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov
• Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	http://www.cdc.gov
• Health Care Financing Administration	http://www.hcfa.gov
• National Institutes of Health	http://www.nih.gov
• Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Admin.	http://www.samhsa.gov
Department of Housing and Urban Development	http://www.hud.gov
• HUD programs	http://www.hud.gov/aborg.html
Department of the Interior	http://www.doi.gov
• U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	http://www.fws.gov
• Bureau of Indian Affairs	http://www.doi.gov/bureau-indian-affairs.html
• Minerals Management Service	http://www.mms.gov
• Bureau of Reclamation	http://www.usbr.gov
• U.S. Geological Survey	http://www.usgs.gov
• Bureau of Land Management	http://www.blm.gov
• National Park Service	http://www.nps.gov
• Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement	http://www.osmre.gov
Department of Justice	http://www.usdoj.gov
• Bureau of Justice Assistance	http://www.usdoj.gov/bja
• Bureau of Justice Statistics	http://www.usdoj.gov/bjs
• Federal Bureau of	http://www.fbi.gov/

Investigation

Department of Labor	http://www.dol.com
• Employment and Training Administration	http://www.doleta.gov
• Mine Safety and Health Administration	http://www.msha.gov
• Occupational Safety and Health Administration	http://www.osha.gov
• Veteran's Employment and Training Service	http://www.dol.gov/dol/ vets
State Department	http://www.state.gov
Department of Transportation	http://www.dot.gov
• Bureau of Transportation Statistics	http://www.bts.gov
• Federal Aviation Admin.	http://www.faa.gov
• Federal Highway Admin.	http://www.fhwa.dot. gov
• Federal Railroad Administration	http://www.fra.dot.gov
• Federal Transit Administration	http://www.fta.dot.gov
• National Highway Traffic Safety Administration	http://www.nhtsa.dot. gov
Treasury	http://www.ustreas/gov
• Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms	http://www.atf.treas.gov
• Internal Revenue Service	http://www.irs.ustreas. gov
Department of Veterans Affairs	http://www.va.gov
Federal Emergency Management Agency	http://www.fema.gov
Environmental Protection Agency	http://www.epa.gov

P O P U L A R   S E A R C H   E N G I N E S

Search engines are powerful tools designed to help Internet users find information on a specific topic. Search engines maintain a database of topical information found on various Web sites. Users may type in a topic or keyword to begin a search of Internet content. The search engine compares the entered topic or keyword with the database and reports back to the user with a list of sites that match the request. It is important that users select search terms that are as specific as possible because the inclusion of generic terms may yield a greater number of unrelated sites.

Each of the following search engines uses a slightly different method of searching the Internet; some only search topic descriptors, while others search text inside of the Web site. Each may have a different method for constructing a query. Some use Boolean logic, allowing searches to be qualified using AND OR, and NOT. Other search engines allow the use of "fuzzy" searches that allow for alternative spelling. Due to the different methodologies each search may yield varying results. Some of the engines may produce a greater number of "hits" or matching sites, but bigger may not always be better because of the superfluous or off-topic sites.

Internet Portals are sites that offer a collection of web based services through a single, often personalized, page. Most portals offer a search engine as well as user defined tools like local weather, TV listings, news headlines, and sports scores. Portal sites like Yahoo and excite are popular and many users rely upon the built-in search engines for general searching. Portal search engines generally lack the flexibility and thoroughness of more powerful dedicated search engines.

The following is a list of search engines, their URLs, and a brief description of their strengths and weaknesses.

Alta Vista   http://www.altavista. com

Very fast and powerful, searches for words within text of Web sites. Allows users to modify searches to include exact phrases, combinations of terms, or limiting certain words. Alta Vista also allows users to search for specific content including images, audio files, video files, and news articles.

Excite   http://www.excite.com

Internet portal featuring a search engine. Limited results are fine for simple searches but lack flexibility.

Lycos   http://www.lycos.com

Portal site that includes one of the original search engines. Allows for filtering of results by words that should be included or excluded from the search.

Web Crawler   http://www.Webcrawler.com

Meta search engine compiles the results of other search engines, presenting them in one place. Limited flexibility in search options but yields a representative sample of results

MetaCrawler   http://www.metacrawler.com

Meta search engine of search engines; selects the top ten hits from other search engines with manageable result size, uses same engine as Webcrawler

Yahoo   http://www.yahoo.com

Immensely popular Internet portal featuring a search engine. Results include "sponsored" sites.

Google   http://www.Google.com

Powerful search engine with friendly, easy to use interface. Allows for maximum flexibility of search terms and filtering. Allows for searches for specific content including images. News search feature searches news outlets for current stories.

Ask Jeeves   **www.ask.com**

Intuitive search engine that allows for questions to be posed in sentence form. Comfortable interface is less intimidating than more flexible search engines but results may not be as precise.

Teoma   **www.teoma.com**

Solid search engine with simple interface. Allows for flexible searches with returns organized by type of content.

G L O S S A R Y   O F   K E Y   T E R M S

ASCII. Plain text characters, ASCII files are easily read by most word processing programs

Boolean Logic. The ability to modify a search using the modifiers "and" "or" and "not." Search engines that use Boolean Logic allow users to combine or eliminate search terms in an effort to gain greater relevance. Named for British-born Irish mathematician George Boole.

Bookmarks. Method of storing Internet addresses for later retrieval. Bookmarks are used by most browsers to allow users to quickly access a previously noted location without having to reenter the address (URL).

Browser. Software program used to graphically view Internet sites. Netscape's Navigator and Microsoft's Internet Explorer are the most popular Internet browsers.

Download. Transferring a file from a remote computer or network to a local computer.

E-mail. Electronic mail messages sent via the Internet or another computer network.

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions). A file containing a list of questions, with answers, commonly asked about a particular subject. FAQ's were originally posted in Usenet newsgroups but have now been adapted to wider Internet use.

FTP (File Transfer Protocol). The Internet's program for transferring files between computers. Most browsers activate FTP automatically when transferring files from a Web site. Certain Internet sites known as FTP sites are designed solely for transferring files.

Home Page. The first page you see when you visit a Web site. Usually contains introductory material and connections to subsequent pages of information.

HTML (HyperText Markup Language). Computer language of the World Wide Web. HTML allows files to contain images, sounds, and animation as well as text.

Internet. Giant system of interconnected computers. Originally developed for the U.S. Department of Defense, and later expanded to universities, and eventually to home and commercial use. The Internet is home to a variety of protocols including Usenet, gopher, e-mail, ftp, and the World Wide Web. The content of the Internet is only limited by the boundaries of human imagination.

Link. A connection between two Web sites or locations. Clicking on a link takes you to another page with content of a similar or related topic. Links may be embedded in text or graphics, or in a separate section organized for that purpose.

Listserv. Also known as a mailing list. Listserv distributes messages to a group of subscribers via e-mail; subscribers may post an article that is sent to all other subscribers. Listserv is often used to foster discussion on a particular subject.

Upload. To send a file to a remote computer or network; the opposite of download.

URL (Uniform Resource Locator). The method of assigning "addresses" to sites on the Internet. Each Web site has a unique location of the Internet where it may be found; browser programs allow you to type in an address or location where a specific page resides. This address is often referred to as it's URL. (example: the URL for the State of Illinois Home Page is http://www.state.il.us)

World Wide Web (WWW). The graphical portion of the Internet. Often referred to simply as the Web, it is the most widely used part of the Internet. The

introduction of the Web fostered the current explosion of Internet users.

Zip Files.   Compressed data files. Zip or zipped files contain data that has been "compressed" so as to take up less space on a hard drive and to be downloaded in less time. To access data stored in a zipped file end users must use an unzip utility to decompress the data. Zip/unzip utilities like Pkunzip and Winzip are available through many Internet ftp sites.